AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Previously presented) A method for estimating ink usage of a print job, comprising:

connecting a computer peripheral device to a host computer having predefined information relating to the peripheral device; and

offering pricing and estimation of ink and image consumables for completing the print job using a plurality of different printers including the computer peripheral device, before the print job is performed.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the host computer is linked to a generic printer driver located on the host computer.

3. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein the host computer is linked to a remote printer driver in a server system.

4. (Original) The method of claim 3, wherein the server supplies information pertaining to a number of instrumented drivers and printers to the host computer.

5. (Original) The method of claim 3, wherein the remote server is linked to the host computer via at least one of the Internet or a local intranet.

6. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising determining printing parameters for choosing a print option that best fits budgetary and printing requirements of the print job.

7. (Original) The method of claim 6, wherein the printing parameters includes at least one of print quantity, print quality, print type and paper type.

8. (Original) The method of claim 6, wherein the printing parameters are ascertained by a remote printer driver and forwarded to a server.

9. (Original) The method of claim 8, wherein the printing parameters are incorporated by the server in data files to be used by various combinations of instrumented drivers and printers located on the server and shared by other printers connected to the server.

10. (Original) A method for analyzing ink usage for a printer, comprising:

communicating a type of ink cartridge and ink reservoir system to a host computer as part of a print job submission;

estimating the ink to be used in a print job based on predefined printing requirements; and

determining the number of print swaths and pages the ink cartridge can complete based on ink available in the ink reservoir system.

11. (Original) The method of claim 10, further comprising relaying to the determined information to a user.

12. (Original) The method of claim 11, further comprising providing the user with a plurality of options, including allowing the print job to proceed, choosing an alternative printing system, and ordering ink consumables for the printer.

13. (Original) The method of claim 12, further comprising offering the user upgrade options, including ordering a generic stand alone printer driver and a server printer driver.

14. (Original) The method of claim 11, further comprising providing the user with a hyperlink via the Internet to a supplier of the printer for automatic ordering of the ink consumables.

15-20. (Canceled)

21. (Previously presented) An ink usage monitoring system for estimating ink usage of a print job, comprising:

means for connecting a computer peripheral device to a host computer having predefined information relating to the peripheral device; and

means for offering pricing and estimation of ink and image consumables for completing the print job using a plurality of different printers including the computer peripheral device, before the print job is performed.

22. (Original) The ink usage monitoring system of claim 21, wherein the host computer is linked to a generic printer driver located on the host computer.

23. (Original) The ink usage monitoring system of claim 22, wherein the host computer is linked to a remote printer driver in a server system.

24. (Original) The ink usage monitoring system of claim 23, wherein the server supplies information pertaining to a number of instrumented drivers and printers to the host computer.

25. (Original) The ink usage monitoring system of claim 23, wherein the remote server is linked to the host computer via at least one of the Internet or a local intranet.

26. (Original) The ink usage monitoring system of claim 21, further comprising means for

determining printing parameters for choosing a print option that best fits budgetary and printing requirements of the print job.

27. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, comprising:

selecting one of the plurality of different printers and sending the print job to the selected printer.

28. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the peripheral device and at least some others of the plurality of different printers are located at different network nodes.

29. (Previously presented) A method for estimating consumables requirements for a print job, comprising:

providing printer parameters indicative of resources of a predetermined printer including an available amount of consumables;

originating the print job at a first computer at a first network node;

communicating the print job to a second computer at a second network node;

at the second computer, analyzing the print job to determine print job parameters that affect a required amount of the consumables;

based on the print job parameters, estimating at the second computer the required amount of the consumables required to print the print job;

based on the printer parameters and the required amount of the consumables, making a determination at the second computer whether sufficient consumables exist to print the print job; and

communicating the determination from the second computer to the first computer.

30. (Previously presented) The method of claim 29, wherein the printer parameters are indicative of an ink type, and an ink cartridge or ink reservoir type installed in the predetermined

printer.

31. (Previously presented) The method of claim 30, wherein the printer parameters are further indicative of a printhead temperature of the predetermined printer.

32. (Previously presented) The method of claim 31, wherein the printhead temperature affects ink usage, the estimating including adjusting the required amount of the consumables based on the printhead temperature.

33. (Previously presented) The method of claim 29, wherein the printer parameters include an identification number indicative of a particular consumable item, the identification number queryable to determine if the particular consumable item is replaced.

34. (Previously presented) The method of claim 29, wherein the print job parameters are indicative of an ink type, a print media type, a number of pages to be printed, and a print quality.

35. (Previously presented) The method of claim 29, comprising:

sending the print job from the first computer to the predetermined printer.

36. (Previously presented) The method of claim 29, comprising:

identifying at the second computer at least one alternative printer having sufficient consumables to print the print job, and communicating the identity of the at least one alternative printer to the first computer.

37. (Previously presented) The method of claim 36, comprising:

at the first computer, selecting one of the alternative printers and sending the print job from the first computer to the alternative printer.

38. (Previously presented) The method of claim 29, comprising:

based on the print job parameters, estimating at the second computer a cost of the consumables required to print the print job, and communicating the cost to the first computer.